

Gamification as an Innovative *Strategy* to Improve Learners' Writing Skills

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Abstract: *In summary, many students struggle to comprehend and interpret printed symbols; even more struggle with complex oral and written assignments. This situation has an impact on their academic success and happiness. Furthermore, they are unable to fully or sufficiently, if not outstandingly, cope with their readings. Students can write, but they can't write at a high degree of skill, ability, or complexity. Some pupils have the ability to write writing that is well-defined, appealing, and intelligible. Only around a quarter of students can write persuasive, detailed responses using engaging language. The primary goal of this research project is to actualize and assess the efficacy of gamification platforms, particularly in terms of improving the learner's overall writing capacities and skills. Furthermore, another goal of the research is to investigate and determine the positive and useful characteristics of modern pedagogy techniques while educators are aware of their various objectives and uses. The key topic of the research will be on Gamification as an Innovative Strategy to Improve Grade 3 Learners' Writing Skills in Mary Josette Academy in the SY 2021-2022. The study is limited to a certain number of participants, which is estimated to be in the region of 30. Furthermore, the researcher concentrates on the viewpoint and experiences of Grade 3 students. An interview will be done to acquire the relevant data and information about the study's main topic and goal. As a result, the researchers will determine the effectiveness and differing perspectives of Grade 3 learners when asked about a structured set of questions, leading to an assessment of the current application of gamification as a modern and efficient key to enhancing the learner's writing skills.*

Keywords: gamification, innovative strategy, writing skills

Introduction

Data of the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) 2019 released and published on Tuesday confirmed that Grade 5 Filipino learners who attained most minor reading, writing, and mathematics ability were significantly more profound than Vietnam and Malaysia.

In terms of writing, only 1% of Grade 5 students in the Philippines performed “higher levels” of knowledge or those who reached the highest level in the criteria utilized by the study. These learners are those with the capacity to compose or write cohesive paragraphs with particular ideas and a stable assortment of appropriate vocabulary. Balinbin (2020). Nearly half or 45% of Grade 5 students in the Philippines were most under the band, indicating insufficient capacity to perform thoughts and perceptions in writing.

In summary, multiple students can barely understand and interpret printed symbols; much more do solely to complicated oral and writing exercises. This predicament influences their academic achievement and fulfillment. Much more, they cannot cope up with their readings thoroughly or adequately, if not outstandingly. Students can write, but they

cannot create writing at high skill, ability, and sophistication levels. Some students can create well-defined, appealing, and understandable prose. It is less than a quarter can write persuasive, elaborated answers with compelling language. Domantay (2018)

Writing is one of the four necessary language macro-skills that every individual is required to learn. It emerges from the three other skills- reading, listening, and speaking- thus, it cannot be understood in obscurity. Notwithstanding their grade level, students are prepared for the rudiments of writing for a diversity of determinations. It states that language learning frameworks are decisive in ascertaining students' further progress in the academy and the workplace. Countless students encounter writing predicaments in terms of their communicative competency levels, learning levels, and the state of English usage in their countries. Define writing difficulties as those associated with the difference from the grammar, syntax (sentence composition), and application of a target language; they are divided into surface obstacles, which lead to grammar, and global dilemmas,

which refer to expressing, to cohesiveness, and system. Ramos (2020)

The struggles undertaken by the students in writing are hard to escape. The examined substantive writing quandaries and self-reported writing difficulties only confirm the presence of language learning obstacles. There is much to be considered with the writing experiences of learners. The challenges described by the students and recorded by the rater show how others may sometimes neglect or overlook their writing skills. Evaluating your own writings can be an excellent way to observe writing improvement.

However, more beneficial assessment tools supervised by the language professors could be designed to reduce these difficulties. Alinsunod (2014)

In the last two decades, research on language pedagogy has given noteworthy attention to providing feedback to students' written outputs. Furthermore, studies have already ascertained the benefits and drawbacks of practicing peer correction maneuverings in teaching writing. Including learners' attitudes and proficiency in using the design, there is still insufficient research examining the ESL teachers' perspectives, experiences, and provocations in applying the strategy in their individual classes. Teachers' beliefs, customs, and attitudes are crucial to conjecture and develop educational processes. They are closely associated with teachers' strategies for coping with difficulties in their daily professional life and overall well-being. They create students' learning environment and impact student impulse and accomplishment. Torres and Robles (2020)

In addition, since it is a different subject, most teachers were just compelled to teach even if they know the subject and the topics. Consequently, they solely rely on their expertise and confined instructional materials, pointing to different ideas and mixed-up classroom implementation. This occurred in teachers powerless to present quality instruction and paramount much more quality feedback on the students' works and activities (Jaca et al., 2019).

Gamification is the concept of employing game mechanics to engage and stimulate students in learning. In other words, games nowadays are an essential part of a student's everyday life. They consume a lot of time performing games. To further enhance student learning, the gamification method was applied, which included game components and game design methods in a non-game context. Furthermore, practicing this method can help develop learning engagement, accommodate learning style and present more adaptive education.

Based on this information and specifications, it is deemed that digital gamification is essential for students to feel satisfied in the teaching process and be associated with writing activities in-school and out- school. It is thought to be helpful in terms of the development of writing skills. In addition, it is believed that gamification will be advantageous for students to feel fitting to the lesson while expanding and amplifying their writing skills.

In this research study, it primarily aims to actualize and assess the effectivity of gamification platforms especially

in further enhancing the learner's overall writing capabilities and skills. In addition to that, another objective of the study is to explore and ascertain the beneficial and advantageous aspects of the modern pedagogy approaches while the educators are being knowledgeable of its variety of purposes and applications.

Action Research Questions

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of Gamification as an Innovative Strategy to Improve Learners' Writing Skills. The findings of this study will serve as input for the development of lesson exemplars in teaching writing among Grade 3 Learners of Mary Josette Academy in the SY 2021-2022.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of learners writing skills as described in the following domains as exposed to gamification strategy:
 - 1.1 focus;
 - 1.2 content
 - 1.3 organization
 - 1.4. style
 - 1.5. convention
2. How effective is Gamification as an Innovative Strategy in improving the writing skills of Grade 3 learners as revealed by their pretest and posttest mean scores?
3. Is there a significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores of the Grade 3 learners?
4. What lesson exemplar in English 3 may be developed based on the findings of the study?

METHODS

This study examines the effectiveness of Gamification as an Innovative Strategy in improving the writing skills of Grade 3 learners in pretest and posttest mean scores. The research study particularly determines how this innovation helps the learners to further improve and enhance their writing capabilities. More specifically, this study investigated the significant difference between the pretest and posttest on the implementation of the innovative strategy which encompasses the application of gamification as it is utilized in the learning process of the Grade 3 learners. This research is conducted on Grade 3 Learners of Mary Josette Academy in the SY 2021-2022.

This study utilized a pretest-posttest true-control group design to determine the effectiveness of Gamification as an Innovative Strategy in improving the writing skills of Grade 3 learners. According to Dimitrov (2003), the pretest-posttest design allows a fundamental determination of comparing groups or measuring change emerging and occurring from an experimental set of treatments.

The dependent variable was defined and illustrated by the overall effectiveness of Gamification as an innovative strategy for improving the learners' writing skills as assessed by the two evaluations: pretest mean scores and posttest mean scores. These arrangements potentially enable control covering the feasible or permissible extrinsic variables

considering that the treatment accumulation consists of points and topics purposively specified from the chosen group. The performance test was employed as a stratagem of evaluating the participants' writing skills as they are part of the treatment groups, specifically the overall performance and improvement of the learners.

In this study, the learners are initially assessed through their levels of writing skills as described in the following domains as exposed to gamification strategy which encompasses the aspect of focus, content, organization, style, and convention towards learning an innovative classroom setup or environment.

The initial date of the implementation was centered and converged on the pretest, which the researchers provided. After executing the pretest to the selected portions of the treatment group, the researcher promptly accompanied the significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores of the Grade 3 learners. It is where the researchers are enabled to assess and evaluate the exemplars and mean scores of the learners while highly considering several factors and aspects relevant to the effectiveness of gamification as an innovative strategy. Moreover, the researcher examined the hypothesis to ascertain and at the same time conclude the notable difference between the pretest and posttest of the selected participants of the experimental group, which are the grade-3 learners.

The study involved elementary learners of Mary Josette Academy. The study includes a specific number of possible participants which is at the range of thirty (30) respondents at most. Moreover, the researcher focuses on the perspective and experience of the Grade 3 learners. An interview will be conducted to gather the necessary information and data related to the centermost topic and purpose of the study which particularly pertains to the primary aspect of Gamification as an Innovative Strategy to Improve Learners' Writing Skills.

The respondents of the research study were purposively chosen as essential parts of the research project as a whole. A purposive sampling technique was employed in this study. The purposive sampling method is convenient when only limited people can attend as fundamental data sources due to research design and purposes, and objectives. It is based on the characteristics and features existing within a particular population group and the overall study. The researchers selected this sampling method as it is cost-effective and time-efficient upon assessing the learners' level of writing skills.

In this research study, it is vital to initially determine the learners' characteristics and experiences as the study involve innovative processes. Before performing a distinct approach or passageway in the learning process, it is crucial for the researchers to represent students' characterizations to circumscribe the appropriateness of modern systems and mechanisms. The determinants that influence the students'

engagement with learning content are students' attitude and enthusiasm to engage in such competitive learning experiences. The present-day educators must discover and carry in mind the skills necessitated by learners for fulfilling the objectives. On the converse, straightforward or complicated tasks act as demotivating elements and negatively affect learning upshots. The learner will see forward to engaging in educational practices if they associate themselves to the context, apprehending itself, and accomplishments. Results of learning particularly in the Grade 3 Learners must be outlined explicitly and are particular.

Gamification is considered an educational strategy where educators and homeschooling parents enhance the everyday activities by implementing typical components of game playing. These factors relate to leaderboards, point scoring, emblems, character building, engagement, and others. The reasoning behind gamification is considerably simplistic – a multitude of games are addictive in their unique ways. Learners of all ages, even grown-ups, allocate hours participating in games with their concentration or attention thoroughly entertained and captivated. The application of games lets learners lose, succeed, and persevere. Learners are proffered a discernment of instrumentality. In games, they control the decisions and actions they perform, and the more agency learners have, the more skilled or abler learners do. Immediate or prompt positive feedback and modest prizes are visible motivators that work. By exercising activities to explain the latest concepts, educators can support a child's development and transformation from studying individually or succeeding in school just for learning only. An introductory game or goal is the solution to unfastening a learner's intrinsic attraction and engagement with a subject, and that's where the gamification takes place, particularly in enhancing the learners writing skills. The foremost purpose of education is to achieve the learning objectives, or else the whole effort will be of no value. Goals incorporate the educational content and assignments employed in the game mechanics and learning exercises to solve them. Material of pedagogy should embrace strategies conveying a participative, engaging, and adopting relevant components of modernized and convenient forms of technology.

The utilization of a questionnaire is a data collection instrument that gives researchers a more accurate outlook in line with the positivist methodology, which establishes the foundation of the prevailing study. A questionnaire is a data collection classification that presents more substantial data and confirms the empirical data. The composition of the survey for this study comprised a comprehensive analysis of the various questionnaires possible to evaluate how technology and media, such as games and applications, are practiced at school, particularly in improving the writing skills of learners. The development of the poll incorporates how each question is intended. It is for sufficing each objective and purpose of the study. The researchers make use of a pre-test and post-test to accordingly assess the

effectiveness of gamification when it comes to the pedagogical strategies of contemporary educators upon enhancing the skills of the learners.

The validators were requested to provide their valuable suggestions and suggestions for the betterment of the instrument, examining the congruency of the test details to Grade 3 learners' writing skills. In terms of checking the pretest and posttest, it will be handed out to respective teachers. The researchers will be formulating a survey questionnaire which then focuses on the effectiveness of gamification in improving the writing skills of learners. As mentioned from the conceptual framework of the research study, the researchers will be utilizing the Likert scale which incorporates structured questionnaires that can be answered by the participants through rating it on a four-point scale basis, specifically it is as follows: 1 – very low, 2 – Low, 3 – High and 4 – Very High. To sum it up, the Likert Scale Survey Questionnaire and the statistical tools in data analysis such as Pre/Post Assessment Analysis Based On Weighted Mean Scores will serve as the primary instrument show the proposed applicability and efficiency of utilizing Gamification as a suitable tool for further boosting the writing skills of Grade 3 Learners.

Firstly, the researchers sought permission, and after it was given, the researchers carried the Informed Consent Form to all learners' parents/guardians to administer the study. They were notified and informed ahead of time about the researchers' main objective and primary purpose in their children's academic accomplishment by implementing gamification to enhance and promote the learners' writing skills and academic performances.

The researcher brought out a request letter to conduct the study regarded by the School Principal and researcher coordinator in collecting and accumulating the necessary data for approval to undertake the said study in elementary schools located at Norzagaray, Bulacan. Additionally, the researchers are also required to formulate a consent letter for the dean, vice president of the school, and the teacher in charge, which refers to the signatories of Dean, College of Education Dr. Ricardo M Matibag and VP of Academic Affairs Dr. Charles Bryan P. Uriarte. After successfully accomplishing the Informed Consent Form, the researchers individually handed out or distributed the pretest to the respondents of the study

To guarantee the confidentiality of the results, the researchers complied with the ethical guidelines and matters associated with collecting data methods. Upon the fulfillment and achievement of the critical data, the researchers manually reviewed, examined, and analyzed the form of pretest and posttest returned by the respondents of this research study. Furthermore, after carefully analyzing the results gathered, the researchers had created well-detailed graphs and tables to organize the data according to its key aspects. Tabulations and the overall presentation of the data and information are all imperative towards the conclusion of this research study, and for that reason, the researchers assured that each and every procedure made are in its respective purposes.

Data privacy and individual approval will be regarded to ensure that the data and information of the respondents are all safe. Data will be managed with the utmost confidentiality and entirely for the efficacy of conducting this study, focusing on the effectiveness and introduction of gamification as an innovative strategy for augmenting learners' writing skills. Rest assured that proper communication to the authorized person will be presented feasible and achieve the clearness and clarity of the vital documents imperative for the outcomes of the research study.

In investigating and examining the participants' performances, pretest summaries of the innovative group were distinguished utilizing the t-test of the independent midpoints. After the pretest, the intervention was performed and presented in the preliminary group. Furthermore, after the delivered intervention, a posttest was conducted to comprehend if there was a meaningful or significant difference between the pretest and posttest outcomes of the experimental group. Additionally, the pre-post assessment analysis is primarily based on weighted mean scores. These statistical measures are supposed to circumscribe the academic performance of the Grade 3 learner respondents in terms of their current writing skills together with the adoption of gamification as an innovative strategy for learning comprehensively.

The research results will be focused on the application and effectiveness of gamification as a strategy for improving or enhancing the writing skills of learners. It encompasses the several factors contributing to the overall suitability of gamification in educational aspects such as focus, content, organization, style, and convention as learners continue to construct their written papers.

These upshots give way to the feasible utilization of gamification to distribute reflections regarding prevailing research results and propose prospective actions which are highly beneficial for the Grade 3 learners' improvement within their writing skills.

This contemporary study also guarantees that the research conclusions will be applied for decision planning and strategy formulation on education pedagogies, and research richness in assistance to the enhanced fundamental education curriculum together with the utilization of gamification. Moreover, the findings of this research study will also be utilized in the School Improvement Plan of Elementary Schools located in Norzagaray, Bulacan which further encourages and augments educators to conduct innovative strategies and developments. Also, the study encourages the adoption of gamification in bolstering the writing skills of learners within a wide range of several factors relevant to their educational statuses or conditions.

RESULTS AND DSCUSSION

Table 1: Level of learners writing skills as described in the following domains as exposed to gamification strategy.

Level	WM	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Focus	4.09	.12	Very Satisfactory
Content	3.79	.21	Very Satisfactory
Organization	4.12	.19	Very Satisfactory
Style	3.68	.23	Very Satisfactory
Convention	3.76	.26	Very Satisfactory
OVERALL	3.89	.20	Very Satisfactory

From the provided table, it shows data gathered from the study. It has different levels which are Focus, content, organization, style and analysis, these are the basis in terms of getting the WM, SD and the Verbal Interpretation which determined as Very Satisfactory for all level. In terms of the overall computed weighted mean of 3.89 and SD = .20. Looking forward with the domains, it was revealed that Focus was $X = 4.09$, $SD = .12$; Content $X = 3.79$, $SD = .21$; Organization $X = 4.12$, $SD = .19$; Style $X = 3.68$, $SD = .23$;

df	t-test	t-test critical value	Probability Level	Decision	Interpretation
17	9.99	2.11	$P < 0.0001$	H_0 is rejected	Highly Significant

Convention $X = 3.76$, $SD = .26$ all domains exposed to Gamification Strategy were rated as Very Satisfactory. Gamification affects the reward and pleasure centers of the brain, as well as the ability to learn. In games where a person wins or receives positive feedback, it is widely recognized that the brain's pleasure pathways are activated, resulting in the production of the neurotransmitter dopamine. The gamification of education is a tactic for improving engagement in educational environments by introducing game elements into the context (Dichev and Dicheva 2017). Hanus and Fox (2015) reported that, in addition to not improving results, gamification has the effect of decreasing pleasure and motivation in the workplace. In the development of curriculum, gamification is the preferred methodology because it raises the attractiveness of learning processes, increases innovation, increases fun, boosts productivity, and increases the ability to retain knowledge and acquire new abilities. Thought and game tactics are employed in non-entertainment environments like as education or the workplace in this technique.

Table 2: Students' Pretest- Posttest Performance in Gamification as an Innovative Strategy in improving the writing skills of Grade 3 learners.

	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Gain Score
Mean	3.3	8.3	0.42

Table 2 shows the results, were the learners' performance before and after the utilization of innovative strategies of gamification to improve the learner's writing skill of Grade 3 learners in English 3. Considering the data provided on the table, indicates that before the utilization of innovation learners' achievement in pretest were 3.3, then in posttest were 8.3. Hence, the learners' gain the score of 42%. More so, it can be concluded that innovative strategies of gamification to improve the learner's writing skill of Grade 3 learners in English 3 had a positive effect on the learners' achievement, as evidenced by the significantly greater mean in the posttest than in the pretest. Moreover, another study conducted by Bal (2019) shows that the gamification of digital games is thought to be aided by an increase in motivation for writing education. It's because digital gamification aids in the development of writing skills. Integrating digital gamification into the writing process creates an active learning environment that fosters creativity. It enables students to be open to change, adaptation, and invention. Furthermore, as shown in the results, positive evidences suggest that gamification has the full potential to enhance the writing skills of students.

Table 3: Significant difference on the pretest and posttest mean scores of the learners on the implementation of the Gamification as an Innovative Strategy to Improve Learners' Writing Skills

Upon computing the table 3, data for testing the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test, it appeared that the t-value is 9.99 which is relatively higher than the t-test critical value of 2.11 at the probability level of $P < 0.0001$ and therefore, in terms of the decision, the hypothesis is rejected while the interpretation represented as highly significant. Thus, there is a significant difference in the post-test and pre-test score of the learners in the gamification as an innovative strategy to improve learners' writing skills.

In addition to that, the claim is also supported with the conducted study of Sultanova (2011), which reveals positive results showing that the application of gamification is a fun and effective way to integrate new vocabulary into learning exercises, and it is frequently used in English schools. When teachers wish to retain long-term understanding of the meaning of words, the context should be studied, exercised, and rehearsed on a regular basis. Educators should try some novel approaches, such as vocabulary games, to pique the interest of English and Writing learners.

CONCLUSION

- Several advances in the realm of education have developed in recent years. The development of gamified pedagogical approaches might be

considered as a viable approach to convey knowledge and promote students' engagement during social distancing in an age disrupted by COVID-19. While standard academic programs are content-focused and mostly disregard personal development, some gamification related-findings suggest that practices might boost motivation and improve learning.

2. Gamification techniques enabled for non-invasive monitoring of students' academic achievement, such as monitoring students' conduct on the web platform or their game achievements. Set of questionnaires were used in other ways to acquire information regarding students' perceptions of their own growth. Some studies, on the other hand, have attempted to assess students' learning through their academic results. To evaluate students' learning and engagement, the examined studies used a combination of quantitative and mixed techniques. In general, the majority of the studies concluded that gamification improved learning results. In some situations, this assertion was based on participants' subjective perceptions collected through surveys, while in others, objective examinations were used to assess students' understanding.
3. In conclusion, gamification can be a strong technique for motivating and changing the conventional aspects to complete specific tasks, even if the tasks are monotonous. Furthermore, games-based learning can make a significant contribution to imparting fundamental skills to children/students who struggle to learn these abilities in other ways, and teachers must assess the usability of such games if they are to be appropriate for this particular specific target population. However, it is critical to integrate gaming features into the application in a way that meets the goal of keeping players engaged. The game aspects serve as external motivators initially, then shift to more potent, intrinsic motivators later. Following that, gamification must be well-thought-out and skillfully applied.
4. This study adds to our knowledge of how gamified environment settings affect students on the basis of their qualities and abilities. It led to a better understanding of how gamification promotes student engagement and learning enhancement. Future studies could look into the effects of gamification in different areas over a longer period of time. It could aid in determining whether gamification diminishes its effectiveness over time, as well as identifying potential saturation points and constraints in its utilization.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Expanding the study to include these participants, expanding the planning and implementation gamification elements into the coursework, and allowing for detailed preparation of how to integrate the use of such aspects to the learning objectives are all productive directions for future research to clearly grasp gamification's effect on learners' writing skills and further motivational levels. Furthermore, a comparison study of gamified and non-gamified classrooms in the framework of the educational setting could add to the gamification research.
2. According to the findings, gamification can allow for a more productive time frame throughout online learning. As a direct consequence, the main conclusions of the reviewed studies have been focused on participants' subjective experiences: "a fun way to learn" or "experiencing to have learned." In some instances, this disadvantage was caused by the authorities' unexpected lockdown, forcing educators to develop and make adjustments their courses all along the way.
3. It's worth noting that many students had extra pressures at home during the COVID-19 lockout, with many having to combine their studies with their employment activities, caring for throughout the day, and an uptick in academic online activities. Additionally, because it is a new way of instructional practices that goes beyond traditional courses, some students and teachers may be hesitant to use a game as an instructional tool. It's also crucial to have strong communication between lecturers and students so that the activity's instructional goal is evident, particularly in enhancing the writing skills and capabilities of students.
4. Finally, the researchers propose to keep in mind that there have been multiple instances of "game changers" in education that have changed dramatically through time. After a period of pinnacle, problem-based learning, for example, which was once a key educational method in several curricula, and social media-based learning, for example, have lose some of their appeal and engagement level. Educational advancements must be established with the help of research facts. Future study on gamification as an educational technique must cover several issues, such as gameplay mechanics and features, in connection to a theoretical perspective or framework.

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